204 consciousness as had Uzvysha upon the development of literature and art. Others were also published, and Molodniak was directed especially at youth. There were also departmental magazines, the organ of the Narkompros of the B. S. S. R., As'veta /Education/ was well known.

545 A special topic should be devoted to the development of the theatrical art.* In any mention of the successful development of the Belorussian national theatres, the very old First Belorussian Theater in Minsk deserves attention. Up until 1930, it was original in its creative work. With very infrequent exceptions it gave translated plays. It promoted a series of talented artists. /9/ The second Belorussian Theater was organized out of studios. A special role must be assigned to the Belorussian Traveling Theater which was organized and directed by the enthusiast Vladislav Golubok. Golubok was a man of many talents. He wrote several plays based on Belorussian national life which ran for long periods, and were removed from the repertoire of the Traveling Theater when the general destruction of everything national in Belorussia began. The services of V. Golubok and his theater to the Belorussian nation are exceptionally great. During its existence it made tours not only of the cities but even of the most inaccessible villages and hamlets under conditions which, materially and otherwise, were most difficult. The productions of the Traveling Theater were in accordance with the tastes of the national masses, always being accompanied by folksongs, music, and fold dancing. V. L. Golubok was deservedly the first person in Belorussia to acquire the title of national artist. In 1937 he was arrested by the N. K. V. D.

The Minsk Jewish Theater under the talented direction of Rafal'skii also enjoyed well-earned fame in Belorussia. It presented a series of plays on national themes. Among the Jews the play "Girsh Lekert" was particularly popular as it portrayed the hero, Girsh Lekert, of the revolutionary struggle in 1902 against the Tsarist government in Wilno.

814 The efforts of Belorussian and Jewish composers and collectors of folksongs, music, and folk dancing deserved particular attention. Their work at this time* was very opportune and is of colossal value. This aspect of the national folk culture had been neither investigated nor written down before the revolution . . . In ten or fifteen years, collectivization would have absorbed the beautiful national art of the Soviet, artifically created, 'chastushka,' composed by obliging

*[Beginning about 1920, Cf. pp. 3-4, category IIC - Analyst]

814 literary and musical masters, in praise of the happy kolkhoz life and of the creator of all this happiness. The talented collector of [661] folksongs, the composer Terravskii, worked indefatiguably after the revolution. His highly useful efforts were frequently interrupted by the N. K. V. D. and eventually (during the Ezhovsh china) he was banished and the collection of folksongs with his own musical arrangements confiscated and withdrawn from circulation. Soviet ethics do not permit the use of the work of a repressed person, no matter how brilliant. Similar also was the fate of the other collector of folk culture, a man who, already advanced in years, left western Belorussia for the Soviet territory in hopes of finding wide scope for his activity. Part of the work has survived along with its authors -- there is hope that somewhere the works of /10/ Terravskii, Grinevich, and [545] others have been preserved. Folksongs, music, and dances were remembered, written down, and arranged.[?] They were performed with great love by various choruses, musical societies in the countryside (later in kolkhozes) and in workers' clubs. Ensembles organized by the Narkompros[1] performed at concerts and on the radio, presenting their programs to the accompaniment of native instruments.

517 814 The study of local lore was very widespread. It was the best loved activity of the village intellegentsia, especially of the teachers. In those days there was neither bureaucratic banality nor any official plan in these regional studies. It was founded upon their own initiative and inclinations, and a free choice of subjects for investigation and study. Those who pursued it devoted their leisure to the study and description of the folk culture, the historical past and ancient monuments of their region. The local flora and fauna were studied and measures were taken to protect types which were becoming extinct (beaver colonies). In some places they published their own works (Gomel') and organized museums of the local displays. They worked voluntarily and were not paid for it. At first the study of local lore was under the tutelage of the Narkompros[1] of the B. S. S. R. and afterwards of the Academy of Sciences which published a special magazine devoted to the subject called, /Nash Krai /Our Country/.

The Land Problem, Boundaries

423 The land question was the most painful and unsettled one in Belorussia. Before the revolution arrangements for the use of the land by the peasantry were different from those in Russia . . . In Belorussia

1 [The People's Commissariat of Public Education of Belorussia -- Analyst]

2 [Beginning about 1920, cf. pp 3-4, category IIc - Analyst]

661 the desire to create its own Belorussian antonomous church. The national movement was also accused of wanting to preserve ancient church buildings, Catholic, Orthodox, and Jewish, at a time when their value as historical monuments was being denied. In this connection the remarks of the same investigating brigade of the Academy are characteristic: "One does not have to go far to discover the reasons for the attentive attitude toward the churches of the National-Democrat counter-revolutionaries, if the basic aims and intent of the latter are kept in mind. /36/ Belorussian National-Democrats -- the Nazalezhnik group -- who were dreaming of an independent national republic the whole time, never ceased in their efforts for an independent Belorussian autocephalous church. A bourgeois state cannot exist without a church. It is not accidental that the discussions about an autocephalous church which have been in vogue since the time of Nasha Niva /Our Cornfield/ have not stopped for a minute either among the Belorussian national-fascists on the other side of the border or among the counter-revolutionary National Democrats in the B. S. S. R. (page 226).

661 814 The well-organized movement for study of the region suffered particularly. Everything that had been accomplished through many long years was subjected to annihilating criticism, the movement now had to devote itself to promoting kolkhoz construction in the countryside; every effort at pure scholarship was declared counter-revolutionary and harmful to the country's socialist construction. R. Vydra in his exposure, Belorusskii natsdemokratizm v kraevodcheskom dvizhenii B. S. S. R., /Belorussian National-Democracy in the Regional Study Movement of the U. S. S. R./, writes this: "Belorussian Nats-Dems, who had almost completely taken over the regional studies movement in Soviet Belorussia, subordinated it to their own bourgeois-restorationist, counter-revolutionary, fascist aims, never hiding their historical connections with their own chauvinist-nationalists forebears of the Belorussian bourgeois camp. For this reason the historical essays on the study of Belorussia or the Belorussian countryside which appeared in Nash Krai /Our Country/ (1) are so very characteristic,

1. Nash Krai /Our Country/ -- the organ of the Central Bureau of Regional Study. The principal articles of the National-Democrats appeared mainly in this magazine.

661 814 even though they conceal the roots of their so opportune study of Belorussia. The articles by Vasilevskii and Kasperovich in Nash Krai, /Our Country/ the historical essay in Kasperovich's book, Kraevedenie, vystuplenlia na I i II Vsebelorusskikh s'ezdakh kraevedeniia, /Regional Studies: Speeches Made During the First and Second Congresses of Belorussian Regional Experts/ all this material unanimously and openly, without any sense of shame, established a connection between the ideas and organization of modern National-Democracy in the B. S. S. R. regional studies movement and the Belorussian bourgeois-democratic movement in pre-Revolutionary times" (pages 244 - 245). Kasperovich, Shliubskii, and others, the spiritual leaders of the regional studies movement, were dismissed from their posts and deported in 1931. Regional studies in the B. S. S. R. was headed by a small-minded careerist, Serafimov, and national-chauvinism was discovered not only in the magazine, Nash Krai /Our Country/, but even in its name. So it was renamed Sovetskii Krai /The Soviet Country/ a title which is loose enough to encompass the whole Soviet Union.

New Personalities /37/

661 Who replaced the arrested leaders of the Belorussian national movement? In place of the imprisoned People's Commissar of Public Education of the B. S. S. R., Anton Balitskii, the former president of the Public Education Workers' Union, Anton Platun, was appointed. He had been director of the union for a very short period. Up until these new appointments he had been public prosecutor in Borisov for a while and then secretary of the Communist Party in the Slutsk district. In general he was considered only of average capacity. He had had neither training as a teacher nor even a secondary education, having progressed no further than one of the so-called higher grammar schools. In order to invest him with the authority befitting his appointment as People's Commissar of Public Education of the B. S. S. R. Platun was given the title of academician. He had no learned works to his credit, and the only lectures he had given were harangues at Party meetings. When the campaign for rooting out the "Natsdemovshchina" began, Platun took a rather active part in the unmasking of the nationalistic inclinations of the poets Ianka Kupala and Iakub Kolos. While in Narkompros he displayed no particular initiative and did not even